



3 1833 01273 8388

GC
976.301
B47bi*Gremillion John Berton.*

BIENVILLE PARISH

Bienville Parish was created out of the original territory of Claiborne Parish in 1848, during the administration of Governor Issaac Johnson and named in honor of Bienville, "The Father of Louisiana." Claiborne Parish, in 1828 was the first subdivision of Natchitoches Parish, which had formed a part of the old historic "Natchitoches District" under French and Spanish rule.

Originally this area was part of the Territory of Orleans which in 1805 was divided into counties and the Catholic Parish of St. Francis became the Natchitoches county. In 1807 the county of Natchitoches was changed to Parish of Natchitoches.

The Natchitoches region was first explored by LaSalle in 1687, and was settled, according to tradition, first by Canary Islanders, who came by way of Mexico in 1691. Bienville and St. Denis made the first extensive exploration of the region in 1700. After 1721 the Spanish and Natchez Indians were on unfriendly terms with the French and little colonization was made in what is now Bienville Parish for over one hundred years.

The lack of a river or navigable body of water isolated the hill parishes of North Louisiana. Waterways were the most dependable highways and settlers did not locate far from them until forced by scarcity of river land.

The parish has an area of 848 square miles and is located in the northwest part of the state. It is bounded by eight parishes and is extremely irregular in shape. On the north it is bounded by Webster, Claiborne and Lincoln Parishes; on the east by Lincoln and Jackson Parishes; on the south by Winn, Natchitoches and Red River Parishes, and on the west by Red River, Bossier and Webster Parishes.

Bienville is one of the "good upland" parishes, because most of its formation is fertile land, of red, sandy clays and some rich bottom lands. The parish is drained by Lake Bisteneau on the west, Bayous Black Lake and Saline in the central part and by Dugdomona "river" and its tributaries along the eastern boundary, all of which flow south. The water supply is abundant as there are many springs and creeks with their numerous branches.

The entire parish was covered with virgin timber in 1837 with long-leaf pine forests beginning near Lucky and extending to the present Natchitoches parish line, cypress in the valleys of the streams and short-leaf pine and oak growing on the uplands.

No Indians were encountered by the settlers of Bienville Parish, but the existence of arrow heads, pottery, and other artifacts indicate that this was the hunting grounds, perhaps of many tribes. Indian relics are more numerous near the salt licks of this parish.

During the War Between the States, when the gulf ports were blockaded, people from many parts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Arkansas came to make salt at the Rayburn, Brushy Valley, Kings Lick, and Lake Bisteneau salt domes. Frequently the wives and daughters of Confederate soldiers brought their slaves to assist them in obtaining the precious commodity. At one time as many as 100 wells were in operation in the Rayburn area, alone.

The first purchases of land in the parish appear to be those of John J. Anderson, Township 16, Range 5, Section 10, one mile SE of Driscoll and John M. Founts (Fouts), Township 15, Range 5, Section 31, about one mile SW from Friendship, both made in 1828. The next was by Chris, Koonco and Allen Martin in 1831, Township 18, Range 6, Section 14, SW of Arcadia. These were the first Townships in which land was proclaimed for sale.

Companies raised in Bienville for the war of 1861-65 were: The Bienville

Blues, whose Captain Ben Pearce was elected Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana while in service; The Castor guards, Arcadia Invincibles, Brush Valley Guards, Sparta Guards, and Picken's and Love's Cavalry Companies completed the roster.

Early papers were: Sparta Times, 1854; Bienville Times which became the Louisiana Baptist in 1856 with Rev. H. Lee, publisher, the office being at Mount Lebanon.

The Jeffersonian, issued at Sparta, 1859, by Judge J. R. Head as an Anti-secession paper, was published "until the passion of the masses rendered reasoning useless." The Southern Banner, August 1860, At Sparta, supported Breckenridge and Lane. The Bienville Messenger was published at Sparta, October 28, 1865. The Rural Times was established March, 1868, by Judge J. R. Head and became the New Era in 1887-1890. Others were The Louisiana Advance of Arcadia, 1884-1890, E. C. Drew, publisher; Baptist Messenger 1880-1884, S. C. Lee, publisher, which became Louisiana Advance in 1884; The Arcadia Record, founded in 1888 by D. H. Patterson; The Arcadia Herald issued by F. G. Hulse in 1889; The Bienville New Era 1885 at Gibsland, by Thomas J. Mangham; and in 1886 the publication was changed to Sparta and the Bienville News, 1890 by R. C. Tooke.

A mail route was established from Natchitoches to Washington, Arkansas with service twice each month in 1823. In 1928 Athens, now "Old Athens" was made the parish capitol of Claiborne which at the time included Bienville Parish.

Settlers flocked to this area in the 1830's when much of the land was thrown open to buyers by the Federal Government. By act of the State Legislature in creating Bienville Parish in 1848, it was stipulated that the seat of the new parish should be located in the center of the area. The proposed site was found to be an 80-acre tract of public land and one of the

1
first acts of the newly organized parish was the filing of a writ of entry for the tract with the United States Land Office. This is believed to be the only instance on record of a parish (or county) obtaining a patent of land from the United States.

The sands in which Sparta was located were of such quality that geologists have given it an individual classification as "Sparta Sand." Today nothing remains of the old town with the exception of an abandoned Negro school building which now occupies the approximate site of the courthouse.

The building of the first two railroads in Bienville Parish during the 1880's proved to be events of far-reaching importance to the parish seat of Sparta, for with the construction in 1882 of a rail line from Shreveport to Monroe, passing through the parish towns of Gibsland and Arcadia, and with the laying in 1886 of another line passing through Gibsland, Bienville and Saline, the inhabitants of the once-flourishing town of Sparta began their exodus to these new channels of commerce. No rail line passed through Sparta and by the year 1890 the population had dwindled to the extent that the State Legislature was asked to give the people of Bienville Parish the opportunity to vote on whether or not they would like to move the parish seat from Sparta and, if so, whether they would like to move it to Arcadia, Bienville, Gibsland or Mt. Lebanon. This the Legislature did in Act 88 of 1892.

Accordingly, in August 1892, the Police Jury of Bienville Parish called an election for October 17, 1892, whereby the vote was for or against the removal of the courthouse from Sparta. The vote was as follows:

For Removal 1,152; Against Removal 750. Majority for removal: 402.

On October 20, 1892, pursuant to the mandate of the people, the Police Jury called for an election to determine where the courthouse should be removed to i. e., Arcadia, Bienville, Gibsland or Mt. Lebanon. This election

was called for November 29, 1892. The results of this election were as follows:

Gibbsland 459; Arcadia 1,138; Bienville 1,053

No town having obtained a majority of the vote cast, it was ordered by the Police Jury that an election be held on January 17, 1893 for the purpose of determining the parish seat of the Parish of Bienville. The results of this election were as follows:

Arcadia 1,323; Bienville 1,258; majority for Arcadia, 65.

On January 19, 1893, the Police Jury issued a proclamation declaring the Town of Arcadia as the parish seat of Bienville parish, pursuant to the elections held in accordance with Louisiana State Legislature Act 88 of 1892 and ordering records of Bienville Parish moved to Arcadia at once and without delay, and further ordering a committee of three (3) jury members to make necessary and suitable arrangements for a house or houses to use for the courthouse, to hold court in and for clerk's and sheriff's offices and all other necessary arrangements.

ARCADIA

The early settlers traded in Trenton which is about six miles north of West Monroe. Among them was Allen Holland from Florida who purchased part of the land which formed the town square of "Old Arcadia" in 1849. Samuel Brown purchased land in 1852 and his son opened the first store in "Old Arcadia" in 1857.

Shadrick P. Sutton, the first postmaster, at the solicitation of his neighbors, wrote to Washington and received the appointment. The office of necessity had to be named so he christened the community "Arcadia" because he found it so beautiful.

On October 2, 1884, Charles Q. Butler deeded the Vicksburg, Shreveport, and Pacific Rail Road four acres of land in consideration of having a depot

built on his land. This caused many people to move to the railroad and "New Arcadia" became a much larger town.

In 1884, Robert A. Smith established the E. & E. Seminary which he conducted for 17 years. Arcadia Male and Female College was chartered in 1888 by its president J. W. Beeson. In 1899 the Seminary and College joined together and finally resulted in the establishment of the public school.

Arcadia is the trade center of an area in which the leading activities are cotton growing, lumbering, cotton-oil manufacturing and the ginning and compressing of cotton. In recent years dairying and broiler raising have been added. The town has one of the oldest and most successful cattle auctions in the state.

Natural gas, dial telephones, municipal water, electricity, hard surfaced streets, a hospital and proximity to Louisiana Polytechnic Institute all add to the convenience of living in Arcadia. Transcontinental highway 80 runs through the town and the Continental Southern Trailway Lines offer service thirty times each day.

The Illinois Central Railway gives excellent freight and passenger service to the community.

Surrounded by gas and oil fields, Arcadia is well located in reference to better industrial development.

RINGGOLD

Ringgold was named for an army officer who had many friends living in that area. This name was first given to the post office and it later designated the town also.

In 1852, a Masonic Lodge was organized and in 1854 the first school was

taught. The school was named "The Ringgold Academy for Boys and Girls."

Perhaps the oldest brick building now standing in the parish is that built in 1880 by John Sledge from bricks he made locally.

The most fortunate location of Ringgold in a fertile farming area has caused the town to prosper. Most of the cotton raised west of Lake Bistineau and in the confines of this parish was shipped from landings, such as Vickers landing, Port Bolivar, Pine Bluff, Adam's Point, and Tarver's Point. The State Legislature has in 1830 appropriated \$15,000 for the improvement of navigation in Loggy Bayou and Lake Bistineau.

Valuable forests existed in this region and sawmills have greatly influenced the prosperity of the people.

Reforestation of land on which trees grew best, utilization of crop land for cotton, always an important crop, and dairying now have helped to keep the income high.

The discovery of oil and gas in the vicinity of Lake Bistineau, recently, has furnished a source of fuel where an abundance of water power exists. Nearby Lake Bistineau provides wonderful recreation in hunting and fishing.

Telephone service, natural gas, a city water supply, several cotton gins, a hospital, a brick plant, all contribute to the desirability of this town.

CASTOR

Castor probably derives its name from the Indian word for beaver. A creek near the town has that name as has another large creek in the state. The present location of this town was determined by the building of the Louisiana and Arkansas Railroad and the fact that two highways form a junction within the town.

A large sawmill, the Bienville Lumber Company, was operated at Alberta, a short distance south of Castor. For over fifty years mills have assisted

in maintaining the economic stability of this area.

The center of a rich agricultural and lumbering region is an important trading point and has many business houses and services. A large gin takes care of the annual cotton crop. The growing of blooded beef cattle and the expansion of the dairying industry is assuming increasing importance in the economy of this section.

Telephone service, electricity, natural gas, black-topped roads, an abundant supply of water in Black Lake and numerous large creeks, excellent fishing and hunting are some of the advantages enjoyed by the community.

GIBSLAND

Gibbsland was named for Jasper Gibbs, who owned a plantation there. The town is located at the junction of the Illinois Central and the Louisiana and Northwestern Railroad. The building of the railroad caused the actual location of the town.

The town became a railroad shipping center of the region and was encircled by a prosperous vegetable-growing and general farming section.

The economy of the town is based on lumbering, cotton growing, and cattle raising, to a great extent.

Natural gas, dial telephones, electricity, municipal water, hard-surfaced streets are among the many things adding to the convenience of living in Gibbsland.

BIENVILLE

In 1890, land was deeded to Louisiana and Northwest Railroad Company by J. D. Breadsley to build a railroad. In 1891, the railroad was put through what is now the town of Bienville. This directly caused Bienville to become a town site.

Before 1897, Andrew J. Bell edited a weekly newspaper known as the BIENVILLE BELL. This newspaper was later moved to Arcadia and was known as the Argus, a weekly paper. Within the space of a few short years, Bienville had sprung up like a mushroom.

At the present time Bienville has dial telephones which connect with Arcadia, Gibsland, Bryceland, Liberty Hill and Mt. Lebanon. Natural Gas is used as a fuel in the community. Electricity is furnished by the Louisiana Power and Light Company. Large gas fields exist near the town.

A black-topped highway runs north and south and hard-furfaced roads connect the town with areas east and west.

Principal crops are cotton and truck growing. A large sawmill is operated in the town limits and the growing of timber is a profitable enterprise.

Dairying has been added recently to the numerous business operations of this community.

SALINE

The town of Saline, situated in the extreme southern part of Bienville Parish was founded by Major J. D. Beardsley on July 29, 1903.

The town is the center of a large agricultural region and is an important trading center with numerous up-to-date business houses and services. This truck-growing community is recognized as one of the best for this purpose in the state.

Good highways and daily bus service make Saline easily accessible. It has dial telephone service and electricity is furnished by the Louisiana Power and Light Company. The main streets are paved or black topped and the beautiful oaks shading them, making Saline one of the most attractive small towns in this area.

JAMESTOWN

Jamestown, Louisiana, was named by Colonel Nobles in Memory of Jamestown, Virginia, which was the home of some of the settlers. The establishment of the Louisiana and Arkansas Railroad through the area in 1899 and the fact that two roads formed a junction at this place, making it an excellent shipping point, caused the town to locate here.

At present, the educational needs of the community are met by a combined elementary and high school, complete with a gymnasium, located on a spacious campus. Two churches meet the religious requirements. Both are Baptist and one is in the process of being replaced by a new building.

The fertile soil of the Black Lake area with its numerous tributaries make the land suitable for agricultural pursuits such as cattle raising, cotton growing and the timber industry. Excellent plant farms have existed here for years. Excellent roads, electricity, telephone service and the fortunate location on the north and south, east and west highways and the Louisiana and Arkansas Railroad are assets to the town and community.

FRIENDSHIP

In 1828, John M. Fouts bought land near Friendship and in 1849 David Malone bought several tracts.

A Baptist church was organized in the 1840's or early 1850's and the earliest date inscribed on tombs in the cemetery is 1854. The first church was created within a short distance of the present site.

A modern school plant with a gymnasium takes care of the educational requirements of the community. A Baptist church, newly constructed, serves the religious needs of the area.

Black-topped roads, telephone service, electricity, a gin, several stores, a large lumber industry, the raising of cattle and cotton, each

contributes to the community. Excellent hunting and fishing facilities are available. The nearness to Louisiana Polytechnic Institute adds to the desirability of this location.

HOPE OR FRYEBURG

James Henderson 1837, Thomas Logan, 1845, and Uriah Jones, W. D. Allums, Rufus Lawhorn, James Walden and Hillery Logan in 1847-1850 were those originally buying land in the area where the town of Hope is located.

Then the Louisiana and Arkansas Railroad was built in 1899, the community began to form a town. Fraternal organizations were chartered, church services held, a school began which in 1910 became a high school, several stores erected and a gin and blacksmith shop began operations. A post office was granted and a freight depot built.

The community was named Hope by Mrs. Ann Davis in the anticipation of its becoming a town. Confusion with Hope, Arkansas, in mail and freight shipments caused a change to Fryeburg for the post office and railway address. The new name was in Honor of C. W. Frye, the first man to have a mercantile business here.

Today, Fryeburg is a farming community located in a district which raises cattle, cotton, corn and peaches as the main crops. The town consists of several business houses and an excellent church meets the religious needs of the community. The children attend the nearby schools at Ringgold, Jamestown and Heflin.

BRYCELAND

Bryceland received its name from William Brice, a plantation owner here in the antebellum days. It had been a community long before it was named. Many of the actual settlers came from the eastern states in covered wagons pulled by oxen. Earlier land, according to court records, was bought by Enos Gough in 1835. Joel Mixon, John and Jane Williams, Williams and

Martin Novid, Jerry Burnett, Hezekiah Reed and others purchased land in this area prior to 1850, probably as land speculation.

A black-topped road passes through the town and a railroad serves the community. Dial telephone service with Arcadia, Gibsland, Bienville, Liberty Hill and Mount Lebanon has been installed. The electricity is furnished by the Louisiana Power and Light Company.

Timber growing, dairying, broiler raising, and cattle production are the bases of the communities' economy. Proximity of Louisiana Polytechnic Institute is also an asset. Gas fields of the Bear Creek area are near the town and unlimited supplies of clay and iron ore exists here, and in other parts of the parish.

COMMUNITIES

Driskill, Union, Bear Creek, Buelah, Armistead, Sailes, Black Lake, Ridge Lawhon, Pronthro, Mount Olive, Smith and Lacy are all communities which have had schools and churches and most of them yet retain their churches.

Spring Hill, Woodarville, Carolina, Ebeneza, New Ramah, Oak Grove, Danville, Taylor and Mount Lebanon are prosperous and populous communities today, with churches and other organizations functioning.

DANVILLE

Earliest records of land purchased near Danville was that of Amos, Cornelius, Simion and Martin Fouts, C. L. Whitton and David Malone.

The economy of Danville is based on timber and farming. The Huil-Hodge sawmill was built in 1904.

OAK GROVE

The first settlers of the Oak Grove community, arrived about the middle of the nineteenth century.

During these years a one room school was built near a spring. The school also served as a church for the community. Soon a Methodist church was organized and in 1901 a church was completed. Services have been held for over fifty years in this building. A two room school was built and maintained until 1931 when it consolidated with the Gibsland High School.

Abundant water makes the section well adapted for cattle raising. Timber and cotton farming are also important.

MOUNT LEBANON

In 1836, settlers arrived in this vicinity from the southern seaboard states. Many were from South Carolina. Attracted by fertile soil and great stands of timber, perhaps the first permanent settlement in Bienville Parish was made here. Many of the pioneers were of the Baptist denomination and in 1837 they built the Rehoboth Baptist Church.

In 1853, Mount Lebanon University was founded, receiving endowment from the Baptist of Louisiana and other states. The college closed during the War between the States, but re-opened soon after the close of the conflict and remained in operation until it was moved to Pineville, Louisiana, where it operates today as Louisiana College. During the war the buildings were used as confederate hospitals. However, a school existed there during the war on a high school level.

During the War Between the States, Mount Lebanon stamp, from the hand press of the local printing shop, is today a rare philatelic specimen. It is red-brown on white paper. The wood block was carved as the stamp ordinarily would have appeared. As a consequence, the only instance, of such an occurrence known to philately.

Three stores now serve the community. Many homes are standing which were built in antebellum days, including the Stage Coach Inn, which is now a private home. This community is one of the "show" places of the parish.

Electricity, dial telephones, hard-surfaced roads and fertile land all make this community a desirable one today.

The Louisiana Baptist Convention celebrated its 100th Anniversary in 1948 at Mount Lebanon church where it was founded in 1848.

LIBERTY HILL

The earliest white settlers in the community of Liberty Hill, settled there during the first half of the last century, along mere trails or traces, later becoming the Vernon and Sparta Road, which later became a part of the stage-coach route from Trenton (now West Monroe) to Shreveport, and another the Gensville-Brush Valley-Liberty Hill and Athens road. The village was later located near the intersection of three roads, at what is now known as the Taylor Graveyard. Another highway to Friendship, Grake's Mill and Natchitoches, intersected these highways at the Village of Liberty Hill.

PINE GROVE COMMUNITY

Pine Grove community, near Saline, settled in the 1830's by Thomas Zilks, had a school for many years. The same building served as a church. Coushatta and Monroe were nearest places that roads permitted them to trade with in earliest days. Many families reside in this excellent farming community, today.

CAROLINA COMMUNITY

The church was established in the 1850's and the first post office in 1896. A gin, grist mill and stores also were operated. A school was maintained from 1886 to 1902. This is a prosperous farming community.

PROTHRO OR BURKE PLACE

This community was settled in 1850 by the Vanzant and Boylston families. A water mill was built and this aided in the settlement of the area. A Methodist church was established and an elementary school. A post office was maintained for some time. There were several stores in existence.

BROWN COMMUNITY

First settled in the 1830's or 1840's Brown, named for the earliest settler, growing community with its economy based on cotton and a water mill. Gins, post office, stores, telephones, and an excellent church organized in 1844, and an elementary school all added to this community. Today, about twenty or thirty families engage in farming, sawmilling, and truck farming. The church has been modernized and has a good attendance.

LUCKY

The Louisiana and Northwest Railroad tracks ended at Lucky for some time before it was extended to Saline. The Lucky and Lewis families lived there as first settlers. A post office existed there for nineteen years.

Two excellent black-topped highways intersect here.

OLD SALINE

The History of the Old Saline Community is that of the Brown Community. Settlers came from South Carolina, Alabama and neighboring states.

ADA

Ada is the name of the shipping point of the Woodard and Walker Lumber Company. The mill is a manufacturer of hardwood and softwood and is the largest in this section. It is located on Highway 80. The name "Ada" is reputed to be that of a mile.

A beautiful Baptist church serves the religious needs of the community. The children attend the nearby Gibsland High School. Their post office address is Taylor, Louisiana.

TAYLOR

A gin, stave mill and the Dawson Planing mill were erected here. The depot was named for J. P. Nelson, Sr., owner of the gin and much of the land. The post office, established in the 1860's was named in honor of Lawrence A. Taylor, merchant and first postmaster.

ALBERTA

The location of this community, about two miles south of Castor on the Louisiana and Arkansas Railroad and near Castor Creek has been a fortunate one. Sawmills and grist mills have been in operation there since the 1850's. Abundant timber and water have maintained the mills and the fertile land has been as asset in the economy of the area.

FREETOWN OR SHILOH CHURCH

Shortly after the War Between the States a group of manumitted Negroes in the region were given government homesteads near the present site of the Shiloh Negro church. They named their settlement Freetown.

Independent for the first time in their lives, they began farming and started a few minor industries such as making baskets from oak splints, raising gourds for containers and dippers, and the manufacture of pottery from local clay. The white people of the area encouraged the colonists by buying their farm produce and their handicraft, but when government aid was withdrawn, the colony disintergrated, it is said that after the negroes had lived apart from white people for some time, they began to drop the use of the English language and spoke in a dialect.

BRUSHY VALLEY

Brushy Valley was a prominent town, located near Salt Springs. The land was described as "highly productive" in 1890 near streams that are not liable to overflow.

At this town, located about five miles southeast of Liberty Hill, was established the first United States Post Office in Ward Six. In 1830 and 1840, Brush (Brushy) Valley was the only town in that part of Bienville Parish in the United States Census enumeration.

Nothing remains except a cemetery and a creek named Brushy, in honor of the one which once existed there.

B. GENERAL POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

In 1950 the total population of the parish was 19,105. In 1960 total population figures for the parish were 16,726. Latest figures available for 1960 indicated more urban residents in the parish than at any other time with 15.2 percent reported. However Bienville Parish a highly rural area with approximately 84 percent of the population classified as rural farm and nonfarm.

The average age per person in 1960 was 29.7 as compared with the state average of 25.3 years. There were approximately 1,680 children under 5 years of age in Bienville Parish in 1960 and 6,406 of the total population of 16,726 were under 18 years of age.

C. AGRICULTURE

Bienville Parish has a background which is predominantly agricultural. Diversified farming has met with increasing popularity; and today, cotton, corn, sweet potatoes, and other crops as well as livestock, contribute to the agricultural income.

According to latest census figures, there are approximately 976 farms in Bienville Parish. The average size of these farms is approximately 127 acres as compared with 103 acres in 1954. The approximate land area of the parish is 526,080 acres of which 126,259 acres, or 24 percent, are in farms. Most recent figures available indicate that 1,563 acres of cotton produced 1,255 bales, 4,505 acres were planted in corn with a yield of 98,122 bushels, and 242 acres of sweet potatoes with a yield of 36,670 bushels. In addition, sale of dairy products proved to be a source of income for many Bienville Parish farmers. Farm income derived from dairy products amounted to \$454,383. Too, poultry and poultry products sold increased to \$363,486 in 1959. The value of sales of livestock and livestock products has increased from

\$858,420 in 1954 to \$1,522,996 in 1959.

Tree fruits, nuts, and grapes are found in a limited and abundant scale in Bienville Parish. For example, peaches, pears, plums; figs, and pecans are harvested throughout the area.

The total value of all farm products sold in 1959 by farmers in Bienville Parish amounted to \$1,990,097, or an average of \$2,088 per farm. This average was considerably higher than the parish average of \$962 in 1954 and lower than the state average of \$4,503 in 1959.

D. EDUCATION

In the decade 1952-62, the school age population in Bienville Parish has decreased from 6,112 to 5,128. This represents a decrease of 16 percent. The state average for the same period was up to 36 percent. Meanwhile the number of high school graduates increased approximately 10 percent having risen from 234 to 257 in the same period.

The enrollment of more children in school plus the enrichment of the instructional program in various subject matter areas have necessitated the addition of numerous public school teachers. In 1952, a total of 211 teachers were employed. Today the number is 221. Ten years ago only 82 percent of the teaching staff had earned four or more years of college as compared with 98 percent of the staff with four or more years of college preparation at the present time.'

An excellent measure of the importance of education and the support provided the program is the amount of money expended for the education of each public school child. In 1952 Bienville Parish was spending about \$235. Today, the amount is \$475. The increase of 102 percent exceeds the state average. In addition, the bonded debt per school age child has risen from \$65 in 1952 to \$249 in 1962--up 283 percent. Investments in school facilities--that is buildings, sites, and equipment have increased 111% percent since 1952. Today, investments in facilities exceed \$3,889,897 as compared with \$1,845,295 in 1952. The people of Bienville Parish are to be commended for their outstanding support and interest in the public school program.

E. TAX EXEMPTIONS AND INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

Louisiana has a ten year tax exemption law for the benefit of industrial expansion. An important index of the extent of industrialization which has occurred in a parish is best exemplified by the approved values of manufacturing plants under active ten-year contracts as of December 31, 1961. As of this date, the approved values in Bienville Parish amounted to \$1,237,631.89. Since 1956 total tax exemptions have amounted to \$1,342,081. These investments represent a significant contribution in the economy of the area, and continued growth and expansion will add considerably to the future of Bienville Parish.

F. EMPLOYMENT

In 1956, a total of 963 residents in Bienville Parish were employed. Of this total 50.2 percent were engaged in manufacturing 22.9 percent were employed in trade and 8.3 percent were in service occupations. Construction accounted for 7.5 percent of the work force in the parish.

In 1961, manufacturing was the leading occupation of 65.6 percent of the working force. Trade and construction were also very active and leading occupations of Bienville Parish.

Average weekly earnings increased from \$44.60 in 1956 to \$57.05 in 1961. This increase represented a rise of 27.9 percent. The rate for the state for the same period was 19.5 percent.

Retail sales in Bienville Parish increased 22.1 percent from 1956 to 1961. In comparison the state average for the same period was 12.8 percent.

Assessments in Bienville Parish have increased from approximately \$14,375,000 to about \$17,097,000 or up 18.9 percent. These data reflect the growth and progress made in Bienville Parish.

G. MINERAL PRODUCTION

In 1962 the leading minerals and produce severed from the soil in Bienville Parish were gas, oil, distillate and pulpwood. Other minor products were timber and gravel. As a result of these minerals, severance tax collections increased from \$187,867 to \$1,022,970 in the period 1957-1962.

This source has provided Bienville Parish with additional revenue.

HECKMAN

BINDERY, INC.

Bound-To-Pleas®

JULY 00

N. MANCHESTER, INDIANA 46962

